

# Guidelines for Collecting Water Samples for Bench-Scale Testing

## Sample Collection

- **Use 1 liter amber glass bottles** unless otherwise stated in the project-specific work plan. Glass is necessary for organic contaminants, since plastics tend to absorb organics.
- **Label bottles.** Please include company name, project name and date since we have multiple clients and even multiple clients with wells identified as “MW-1”.
- **Fill bottles to the top** – a little headspace in the neck is okay, but more than that can adversely affect contaminant concentrations, especially for gas, diesel, BTEX, and other easily biodegradable compounds.
- **Chill samples but do NOT chemically preserve the water** unless directed in the work plan.
- Some sediment in the bottles is acceptable, but if more than about ¼ inch is present, please provide additional sample. Unless otherwise requested, PRIMA will exclude excess sediment to the extent feasible when compositing the water.

## SAMPLE PACKAGING/SHIPPING

Shipping 1L glass bottles full of water can be tricky. From those of us on the receiving end, we offer suggestions to help your water samples make a safe journey:

- **More wrapping material is better.**
  - If using bubble wrap, wrap each bottle in 2-3 layers of large bubble wrap or 3-5 layers of small bubble wrap.
  - Other wrapping materials are fine, too. Feel free to be creative. (We received bottles wrapped in diapers once—no breakage there.)
- **Confirm bottles are adequately wrapped** using the “clink” test. Gently tap two wrapped bottles together. If they make a clinking sound, wrap them some more. Otherwise, a very small shift during transport may cause breakage. If they don’t clink, you’re probably fine.
- **Snuggle up.** Wrapped bottles should fit snugly in the cooler. Add blue ice or other material to minimize the potential for bottles to shift.
  - Do not use ice as a packing material—it melts, even in winter.
  - Do not use cornstarch peanuts. They are environmentally friendly, but they are also water soluble. Even a little water will start to dissolve them.
- **Keep samples cold.** Using wet ice is fine as long as bottles are well-wrapped and can’t shift much as the ice melts.
- **Ship samples in a cooler via overnight delivery.** PRIMA does not receive samples on Saturdays.
- **Don’t forget the chain of custody.**

## HOLD TIME

There is no official hold time for water for bench-scale tests. However, bench testing should begin as soon as practical, preferably within 14 days of sample collection. Contact PRIMA if samples must be held for more than 7 days prior to authorizing the bench test.